

Preventive guidelines to be followed by schools to curb the spread of infectious diseases

Procedures to suspend studies in educational institutions in the Sultanate

In light of the observations that had been announced by the World Health Organization on 30/01/2020 that the Coronavirus virus (COVID-2019) epidemic is a public health emergency of international concern, and based on data and developments about Coronavirus (COVID-2019) infection and conditions surrounding the epidemiological situation locally and globally, all Indications are that the risk of its spread in the Sultanate is very high.

Whereas the Ministry of Health follows up the updated epidemiological situation of Coronavirus (COVID-2019) and conducting periodic reviews to assess the degree of risk in the Sultanate of Oman, based on any information that requires this and communicates with other authorities concerned with public health emergencies. As is well known, the spread of any infectious disease and its development into an epidemic depends on several factors, the most important of which are:

- The strength of the epidemiological surveillance system and the rapid response to this situation before it spreads to society.
- Community outreach, educating community members on ways to prevent and control infections, and adhering to public health guidelines.

The epidemiological level of global preparedness and response to public health emergencies is categorized into five levels (1-6) according to the epidemiological level of disease prevalence as shown in the bellow table, whereas the table shows the total recommended procedures for suspending studies in the classrooms, schools / educational institutions individually, at the state, governorate, or national level.

Individually, at the state, governorate, or national level

The table below shows the overall procedures and measures recommended for suspending studies in classrooms or schools / educational institutions:

Level	Classroom	School/Educational Institution	All educational institutions in the state	All educational institutions in the Governorate	All educational institutions at the national level
First level (readiness)	It is not recommended to suspend studies in any school or educational institution, rather it is sufficient to adhere to the preventive measures that must be followed (procedures attached)				
The second level (there is a risk of cases entering country from abroad)					
Third level (the presence of cases entering country from abroad)	Suspending studies in the classroom, in case that the student has laboratory-confirmed case.	- Suspending studies at the school or educational institution in the event that one of the cadres working in the school or educational institution has laboratory-confirmed case. - Suspending studies at the school or educational institution if more than one student or more than one class have laboratory-confirmed cases.	It is not recommended to suspend studies in other institutions but rather to adhere to the preventive measures to be followed (procedures attached)	It is not recommended to suspend studies in other institutions but rather to adhere to the preventive measures to be followed (procedures attached)	It is not recommended to suspend studies in other institutions but rather to adhere to the preventive measures to be followed (procedures attached)
Fourth level (local transmission of the disease)		Suspension of studies in the school or educational institution, in the event of a confirmed positive case not related to travel.	Suspension of the study if there are sources of the disease in the state not related to travel.	Suspension of the study in the event that there are sources of the disease not linked to travel in more than one state in the governorate.	It is not recommended to suspend studies in other institutions but to adhere to the preventive measures that must be followed (attached procedure)
Fifth Level (community outbreak)				Suspension of the study if there are sources of the disease unrelated to travel in more than one governorate.	

- A decision to suspend and re-study is made based on a consultation between the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Higher Education, or the Ministry of Social Development (nursery and pre-schools).
- Attached preventive measures to be followed in schools and educational institutions.

Preventive measures to be followed by schools to reduce the spread of infectious diseases

First: Health Awareness:

School health awareness team shall implement the awareness plan by focusing on the following:

- Make optimal use of educative materials, such as:
 - Stickers should be kept next to the washbasins, showing how to wash hands with soap and water.
 - Posters in classrooms and hallways in the school showing how to disinfect hands with alcoholic disinfectants.
 - Putting posters showing the disease in suitable places that can be read by students.
 - Publish educative materials through the school's screen displays, if available.
 - Providing lectures and distributing health brochures on the disease to students, all school employees and parents.
 - Take advantage of the peer education program to raise awareness about this disease.